

Employee / Volunteer Code of Ethics

Sexual Assault Service Programs Employees & Volunteers Work for Survivor Empowerment and Social Justice

- ☐ I bring a social justice perspective to this work, providing survivor-informed, non-judgmental services that empower survivors and decrease their vulnerability.
- ☐ I communicate the message that while sexual violence causes great harm, survivors are able to heal from this violence.
- ☐ I provide professional services to everyone regardless of race, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and all other aspects of identity.
- ☐ I hold the perpetrator of sexual violence alone responsible for the violence.
- ☐ I respect the individuality of each survivor and am committed to providing the highest quality of services possible to all survivors in ways that help them to help themselves and make their own choices.

Sexual Assault Service Program Core Beliefs *(adapted from the SADI project)*

- 1 Survivors are whole, healthy, capable human beings. Effective advocacy is led by the survivor's self-defined needs.
- 2 Survivors come to us with their own unique cultural, historical, societal, and community realities that shape their path in healing after sexual violence. Survivors deserve advocacy that is grounded in the cultural, historical, societal, and community realities of their life.
- 3 Survivors have done nothing to warrant or deserve the harm they experienced. Survivors are never to blame for sexual violence.
- 4 Survivors share with us what they choose, want, or can about their experiences. Advocates help to create a safe, unconditional, and nonjudgmental space to help make this possible.
- 5 Advocates believe the survivor in what they tell us. It is not our job to decide the validity in their story of what happened to them. What each survivor is experiencing is a normal response to the harm and threat of sexual violence. Survivors do not need to be fixed by advocates. They can benefit from an advocate's help and support as they access their own strength and resilience.

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6 Survivors do not need advocates to provide solutions. They do need to have advocates meet them where they are, listen to them, and validate their experience.

7 Every survivor's experience is different. Survivors are the experts in their lives and will know which paths are best for them; advocates have important connections to resources to help survivors on those paths.

8 Survivors may be overwhelmed by the impact of trauma, a rush of coping mechanisms, and myriad reactions to sexual assault; advocates can normalize these experiences for survivors and remove the pressure to "get over it" or "move on".

9 Advocates continually grow and strengthen their advocacy skills by listening to and honoring each survivor they serve.

10 Above all, advocates honor survivors' resilience, and provide their time, energy, and support to hear survivors' truth.

The role of an advocate is to be a safe person where all thoughts can be expressed and the survivor can be encouraged to find their right solutions. Sometimes advocates might feel that listening and validating is simply not doing enough for someone in crisis. However, we know there are few other places that this essential, nonjudgmental, supportive option exists in communities. Active listening, affirming the survivor's strength, and creating the environment in which the survivor can lead is exactly what survivor-centered and trauma-informed advocacy is.



Sexual Assault Service Programs Employees & Volunteers Hold High Standards of Integrity in Their Work

- ☐ I will use my professional relationships for professional purposes only, not seeking personal gain, and will identify, disclose, and resolve any potential or actual conflict of interest in accordance with agency policy.
- ☐ I will maintain professional boundaries.
- ☐ I will maintain the highest level of confidentiality with survivor and agency information, including when storing and disposing of records.
- ☐ I will respect the rights and views of colleagues of all professions and treat them with respect and cooperation.
- ☐ I am responsible for my own history, beliefs, values, and limitations and the effect of these on my work.
- ☐ I will strive to maintain my own health and personal stability while working to assist others with healing from sexual violence.
- ☐ I will report unethical behavior to my supervisor.
- ☐ I will be prepared to respond to and focus on the unique needs of survivors, having taken care of my personal needs and responsibilities prior to arriving at the center or starting an on-call shift.

Sexual Assault Service Center Employees & Volunteers Hold High Standards for Competence in Their Work

- ☐ I will continuously assess my strengths, limitations, effectiveness, and biases.
- ☐ I will access on-going formal and informal training and education to improve my skills and professional work.
- ☐ If I work in a domestic violence/sexual assault-identified dual program, I recognize the unique environment of dual programs that serve sexual assault and domestic violence survivors and will access the training needed to provide a crisis response to survivors of both forms of violence.
- ☐ I will work in accordance with the mission and policies of the organization I serve.
- ☐ I will adhere to the core service standards of New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

 Name

 Date

-Revised August, 2021